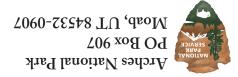
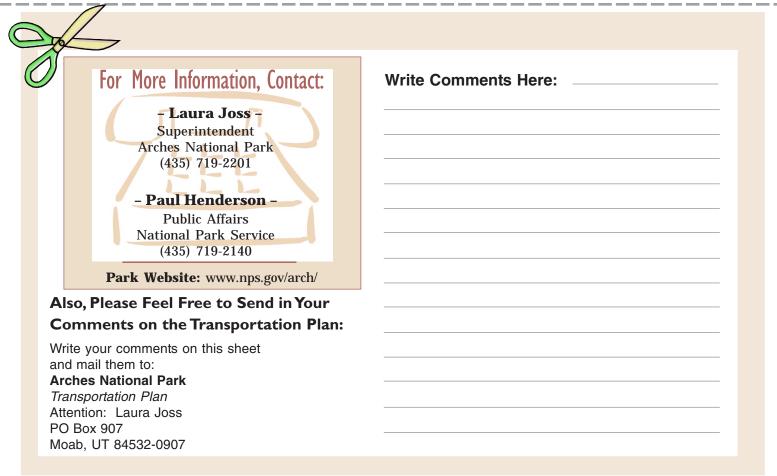
Mailing Address









Arches National Park Transportation Plan

Project Newsletter

October 2004

Project Description

The popularity of Arches National Park has grown rapidly in recent years, and the quality and diversity of visitor experiences at many popular attractions in the park have changed over the years. Traffic congestion and crowding occur more frequently at parking areas, trailheads and popular rock formations. During the busy season, parking areas reach capacity and trailheads become congested. Cars are often parked along road shoulders causing damage to natural resources.

Based on these conditions, the National Park Service (NPS) has identified the need to develop a Transportation Implementation Plan for the park. This transportation plan will begin to address problems that past projects couldn't solve and will use transportation planning strategies to address issues resulting from crowding. The plan will focus on the needs of the park, but will also consider potential transportation alternatives and solutions that might be beneficial to the City of Moab and vicinity.

A variety of potential strategies and approaches will be considered for mitigating transportation problems to meet the goals and objectives of the park's General Management Plan (GMP) and Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP) Plan.

Come Share Your Ideas! PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Stay tuned for information about upcoming public meetings in late Spring 2005.

See back page for contact information



Visitors parking along unimproved roadside areas is causing damage to resources.

Scope of Project

The following tasks are being completed as part of the development of the Transportation Plan for Arches National Park:

- Data Collection/Research
 Existing Conditions
 Analysis
- Evaluation of Travel Survey Results

- Workshops with Park Staffand Regional Stakeholders
- Public Workshops in in Region and Other Public Outreach Activities
- Forecasting of Visitation Trends

- Evaluation of Alternative Transportation Strategies and Preparation of an Implementation Plan
- Environmental Analysis (NEPA and NHPA Compliance)



Pathway at the Windows

Transportation Alternatives Being Analyzed

The project team is currently analyzing the following transportation alternatives for implementation at Arches National Park within the next five years.

Alternative A: No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative (Alternative A) would involve no change or improvements to current transportation functions in the park. This alternative provides the opportunity to analyze current problems and challenges related to: parking management and congestion at park features, visitor experience and resource protection, and the implications of not making any improvements or adding any new transportation facilities and services.

Alternative B: Implementation of Improvements to Enhance Visitor Access and Experience (Action Alternative)

This action alternative includes proposed improvements and programs that could be implemented in the near term, upon completion of an environmental assessment and the availability of funding, including:

- Various scenarios for optional interpretive motorized tours into the park
- Phased programs to disperse visitation and reduce congestion at peak periods, such as

- reservations at key attractions (Delicate Arch, Windows, etc.)
- Recommendations for improving and/or closing roadside pull-off areas in the park
- Traffic calming improvements to improve safety
- Recommendations for interpretive exhibits and visitor information and signs to inform visitors about tour opportunities
- Partnering strategies with Moab and regional interests to disperse visitation
- Traffic congestion management strategies appropriate for the park and the region (i.e. parking lot monitoring, electronic signs, information kiosks, etc.)
- Improvement of existing parking areas to control illegal parking and resource damage

Longer-Term Options Being Studied

Concurrent with development of the Transportation Implementation Plan, the team is studying potential transportation options for possible longer-term implementation at the park, pending further analysis and public review through a future GMP amendment process. Elements being studied include:

- Continue to develop partnership opportunities with Moab, Grand County, Bureau of Land Management and others to explore shuttle routes from downtown Moab to the park Visitor Center, with intermediate stops at hotels, campgrounds, park and rides, etc.
- Options for improving and enhancing access, safety, and mobility for bicyclists and pedestrians within the park, including analysis of potential shoulder widening and multi-use pathways where appropriate in the park
- Phased park-based shuttle system (potential considerations and costs related to various shuttle routes/operational scenarios)
- Shuttle-based visitor management solutions
- Additional roadway and traffic-calming improvements that likely would be needed if a regular park-based shuttle system is implemented
- Additional amenities, picnicking facilities, and shade structures and other improvements for shuttle riders/ visitors at shuttle stops/hubs
- Additional interpretive exhibits/ signage that would be supportive to a park-based shuttle system

Project Update

Since the beginning of the project, the Project Team has gone through an in-depth public involvement process that included public workshops in February 2003 and November 2003, and distribution and analysis of visitor surveys and traffic data in the park over the spring and summer of 2003. The team is currently identifying and analyzing potential transportation solutions and preparing an Environmental Assessment for solutions to be implemented in the near term. The schedule for completion of the Transportation Plan is depicted below. Look for future updates on the progress of the Transportation Plan and public meeting announcements as the project proceeds.

Public meetings to present the Transportation Implementation Plan recommendations and environmental analysis will be held in Spring 2005.



Long-term options include pedestrian improvements to increase safety throughout the park.

Project Schedule

